

CASINO STYLE GAME OF CHANCE APPARATUS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/189,544, filed March 15, 2000.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 This invention relates in general to games of chance and more particularly to a casino game apparatus having a roulette table layout played with conventional rules for roulette, except the game is played without a roulette wheel.

10 Casino games such as craps, roulette, poker and blackjack have become very popular over the years. They are popular with players and profitable for casinos. However, there are only a few places where people interested in such games can go to play because the games are not allowed in most states. Also, people are aware that roulette wheels can be made to favor particular results when rolled. Whether or not such roulette wheels are ever used in roulette games at casinos, players always have a lingering
15 doubt that they might be, particularly since the odds always favor the casino. Therefore, a casino type roulette game that can be played with a roulette table layout, with roulette rules, and with all the fanfare, excitement and ambience that players expect and enjoy at a casino, but with a completely random method of determining the results of a play or spin,
20 other than with the use of a roulette wheel, and for this reason may be played in more venues, is desired.

The apparatus of this invention uses a conventional roulette table, with a conventional roulette table layout, except it does not use a roulette wheel. However, since a roulette wheel is not used in the game, a minor variation is made in the layout or marked table surface. As will be
5 explained in more detail later, the numbers "0" and "00" marked on the conventional roulette table layout would be replaced with the numbers "37" and "38".

The conventional roulette game uses a roulette ball which is dropped or spun into a spinning roulette wheel. As the wheel slows down, the ball
10 eventually comes to rest in one of the numbered pockets positioned around a lower circumference of the inside of the wheel. This process of the ball landing in a numbered pocket is a means of generating a random number. The play of the game is based on this outcome of the spin of the roulette wheel, also known as a decision. Wagers can be made and each decision
15 determines whether or not a player wins or loses, based on the rules.

To play the game of this invention without the use of a roulette wheel several means can be used to generate a decision. One way to generate a decision is by using a ball blower, commonly used in bingo, the blower having balls numbered from one to thirty-eight. The number of the
20 numbered ball selected by the ball blower would constitute a decision and the play of the game would continue based on this decision and the rules of the game. Another way of generating a decision is to use a deck of cards having thirty-eight cards, each marked with a separate, distinct number from one to thirty-eight, inclusive (representing the thirty-eight numbered
25 pockets in a roulette wheel). The card deck would be shuffled by a card

shuffler and one card would be dealt from the shuffler. The number of the card dealt would constitute a decision. Another way of generating a decision is to use a random number generator (hereafter ("RNG")) to select a number from one to thirty-eight, inclusive, the number constituting a
5 decision. Also, a player could be allowed to use a remote control to activate the RNG to select a number which would constitute a decision. A large monitor can be placed for players and observers to easily view the results of the selected number which would be displayed by the monitors.

Other advantages and attributes of this invention will be readily
10 discernable upon a reading of the text hereinafter.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game
15 having a roulette table layout which can be played by conventional roulette rules, but without a roulette wheel.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout without a roulette wheel.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game
20 having a roulette table layout where the numbers "0" and "00" are replaced with numbers "37" and "38".

An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout in which a random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel can be obtained by a ball selected by a

ball blower having a set of balls numbered from one to thirty-eight, inclusive.

5 An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout in which a random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel can be obtained by a number selected by a random number generator, the selected number being in the range from one to thirty-eight, inclusive.

10 An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout in which a random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel can be obtained by dealing a card from a deck of cards shuffled by a card shuffler where the card deck has a set of cards numbered from one to thirty-eight, inclusive.

15 An additional object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout in which a random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel can be obtained by a number selected by a random number generator which selects a number at random in the range from one to thirty-eight, inclusive, when activated by a remote control.

20 A further object of this invention is to provide a casino game having a roulette table layout in which the results of the random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel can be displayed for the players and observers to see.

25 These objects, and other objects expressed or implied in this document, are accomplished by a game of chance including a table having number indicia for placing bets thereupon, a number selector which when

actuated for a game, produces a randomly selected number, the number being determinative of the game's winning indicia, and a display associated with the table, for displaying the selected number, the display being clearly viewable by all the players at the table. In one embodiment the number selector is a ball selector which, when actuated, randomly singulates one of a plurality of numbered, agitated balls contained within a chamber, the number on the singulated ball being the selected number. Preferably the chamber contains thirty-eight balls, each ball marked with a different number, the numbers ranging from one to thirty-eight, inclusive. Also preferably a ball selected by blowing to the top of the chamber and into a singulating chute communicating with the chamber, and the display includes a structure affixed to the table and disposed, in part, above the number selector, a camera affixed to the structure proximate the singulated ball for viewing the number on the ball, and a display screen affixed to the structure for displaying to participants and observers of the game the camera's view of the singulated ball. Preferably the table's number indicia resembles the indicia of a conventional roulette table, and numbers "37" and "38" are used in place of the conventional numbers "0" and "00."

In another embodiment, the number selector includes a numerical processor proximate the table, software installed in the processor for selecting a number at random, when actuated, and a display communicating with the processor for displaying the selected number, the display being clearly viewable by all the players at the table. Preferably a dealer can control the processor remotely by a remote control communicating with the processor for activating the software for selecting a random number.

In a third embodiment the number selector includes a deck of numbered cards, a shuffler for arranging the cards in a random sequence, and a structure for assisting a dealer in singulating one numbered card from the shuffled deck. In this embodiment the display can be the singulated card disposed to allow all players at the table to view the number on the card.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a pictorial view of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a pictorial view of another embodiment of the invention.

Figure 3 is a pictorial view of another embodiment of the invention.

Figure 4 is a pictorial view of another embodiment of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to Figure 1, the preferred embodiment of the invention is shown and generally designated 2. A generally conventional roulette table 4 used in playing the casino game of the invention has a generally conventional roulette table layout 6. The principal difference from a conventional layout is that there is no roulette wheel. Additionally, the layout of this invention preferably replaces the numbers "0" and "00" of a conventional layout with the numbers "37" and "38". This is done because it is easier to have random number generators which can select numbers from the range of from one to thirty-eight, rather than to modify such a RNG to be able to select from the range of from one to thirty-six and "0"

and "00". It is also somewhat easier to obtain balls for ball blowers and numbered card decks where the balls and cards are numbered from one to thirty-eight rather than including the numbers "0" and "00". This layout difference from the conventional roulette table layout applies to each of the
5 embodiments described in more detail below.

Referring again to Figure 1, a ball blower 8 is positioned on the table where a roulette wheel would otherwise be positioned. The ball blower is preferably of a type commonly used in bingo games where one of a set of light-weight, numbered, plastic balls can be randomly selected. The balls
10 are kept in movement inside a transparent cover and, when the blower is activated, one ball nearest the entrance of a tubular ball chute (not shown) is selected by allowing the ball to enter the chute where it is blown to the top of the chute 10. In the top of the chute the ball can be viewed by the dealer and players and can also be viewed by a video camera 12. A display
15 structure 14 is mounted above the ball blowers, preferably affixed to the table 4. A video camera 12 is affixed to the display structure above the ball blower 8 so the number on the ball selected by the ball blower can be viewed in the top of the chute 10 by the camera. A display monitor 16 is
20 affixed to the display structure, positioned for easy viewing of the dealer, players and observers. The monitor displays the camera's view 18 of the selected ball in the top of the chute of the ball blower. The view 18 is the number marked on the ball that is in the top of the chute. The number displayed constitutes the random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel and play resulting from the decision will proceed
25 according to the conventional roulette rules. Thus, instead of the number of

a pocket in a roulette wheel in which a roulette ball comes to rest, it would be the number on the selected ball that would determine the play according to conventional roulette rules. The display structure 14 can contain signage 20 with flashing lights for adding additional casino atmosphere to the game.

5 The play is by roulette rules, with players making bets on the table layout 6. The ball blower 8 contains thirty-eight balls, each ball marked with a separate, distinct number from one to thirty-eight, inclusive. When the players have placed their bets, the dealer will start the ball blower which will cause the balls in the ball blower to be continually stirred. After the
10 balls have been allowed to be stirred, the dealer will push a "select" button on his blower control unit (not shown) which will open access for the balls to the bottom of the chute. A blower forcing air up the chute will cause the next ball that passes the opening to the bottom of the chute to be forced up the chute where it can be observed in the top of the chute 10 by a video
15 camera 12. The ball's number 18, as viewed by the camera will be displayed on the screen of a display monitor 16. The ball blower will select a numbered ball and the results of the selection will be displayed on the monitor for the dealer, players and observers. The number displayed constitutes the random number decision generation replacing the use of a
20 roulette wheel and play resulting from the decision will proceed according to the conventional roulette rules. This would constitute a decision and the results of the numbered ball selected would be treated the same under the rules as if a roulette ball had come to rest on the equivalent number of a roulette wheel. The use of the ball blowers to select the random number

decision generation creates a lottery style game, with no material difference from those used in many states having lotteries, including California.

Referring to Figure 2, another embodiment of the invention is generally designated 32. This embodiment uses the roulette table 4 having
5 a roulette table layout 6 of the preferred embodiment. Since no roulette wheel is used in the game there is more space available on the table. In this embodiment there is a dealer's control unit 34 preferably affixed to an underside of the table. A monitor or CRT 36 is positioned on the table for the dealer. The control unit contains a small computer having software for
10 random number generation of a number from one to thirty-eight, inclusive. The generation of the number will be based on the odds of picking one card from a thirty-eight card deck. At the dealer's signal, the random number generator software selects a random number within the range of from one to thirty-eight. The number is displayed on the screen of the CRT for the
15 dealer and players to see. Also, a display monitor 38 displays the selected number 40 for players and observers to see. The monitor can be supported by a rigid hollow tube 42 affixed to the table. The monitor could also be mounted on a stand or other base placed some distance from the table. The control unit or enclosure affixed beneath the table would be locked and
20 sealed by the gaming commission responsible for the play of such games prior to the start of play.

When the players have made their bets the dealer signals the control unit 34 to select a number. The software in the control unit has the random number generator select a random number from the range of from one to
25 thirty-eight. The selected number 40 is displayed on the CRT 36 and the

screen of a display monitor 38. The number displayed constitutes the random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel and play resulting from the decision will proceed according to the conventional roulette rules. This would constitute a decision and the results of the number selected would be treated the same under the rules as if a roulette ball had come to rest on the equivalent number of a roulette wheel.

Referring to Figure 3, another embodiment of the invention is generally designated 52. This embodiment uses the roulette table 4 having a roulette table layout 6 of the preferred embodiment. Since no roulette wheel is used in the game there is more space available on the table. In this embodiment a card shuffler 54 is used to provide the random number decision generation. The shuffler is positioned on the table for use by the dealer. A deck of thirty-eight cards (not shown) is used. The deck has cards bearing the numbers from one to thirty-eight, inclusive.

When the players have made their bets the dealer inserts the deck of cards into the shuffler. The shuffler thoroughly shuffles the cards and the dealer draws one card. The card is held or placed so the players and observers can see the card. The number displayed constitutes the random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel and play resulting from the decision will proceed according to the conventional roulette rules. This would constitute a decision and the results of the numbered card selected would be treated the same under the rules as if a roulette ball had come to rest on the equivalent number of a roulette wheel.

While not shown, the invention encompasses the mounting of a video camera for viewing the card drawn by the dealer for displaying on the

screen of a display monitor placed in position for the players and observers to see the results of the draw. By using cards the game becomes a house banked percentage card game.

Referring to Figure 4, another embodiment of the invention is
5 generally designated 62. This embodiment uses the roulette table 4 having a roulette table layout 6 of the preferred embodiment. Since no roulette wheel is used in the game there is more space available on the table. In this embodiment there is a dealer's control unit 34 preferably affixed to an underside of the table. A monitor or CRT 36 is positioned on the table for
10 the dealer's use. The control unit contains a small computer having software for random number generation of a number from within the range of from one to thirty-eight, inclusive. The generation of the number will be based on the odds of picking one card from a thirty-eight card deck. To provide an increased sense of involvement for the players, a remote control
15 64 can be operated by a player. The remote control can communicate electrically with the control unit by means of a control cable (not shown), or wirelessly by means of electronic transmission, in similar fashion as a garage door opener's remote control communicates with the opener. The remote control would activate the random number generation software in the
20 control unit to select a random number. The software would select a random number based on the odds of picking one card from a thirty-eight card deck. When the number is selected, it is displayed on the screen of the CRT for the dealer and players to see. Also, a display monitor 38 displays the selected number 40 on the screen of the display monitor for
25 players and observers to see. The monitor can be supported by a rigid

hollow tube 42 affixed to the table. The monitor could also be mounted on a stand or other base placed some distance from the table. The control unit or enclosure affixed beneath the table would be locked and sealed by the gaming commission responsible for the play of such games prior to the start of play.

When the players have made their bets the dealer would hand the remote control 64 to a player to initiate the play of the game. The player would press the button (not shown) on the remote control which would signal the control unit 34 to select a number. The software in the control unit has the random number generator select a random number from the range of from one to thirty-eight. The selected number 40 is displayed on the CRT 36 and the screen of a display monitor 38. The number displayed constitutes the random number decision generation replacing the use of a roulette wheel and play resulting from the decision will proceed according to the conventional roulette rules. This would constitute a decision and the results of the number selected would be treated the same under the rules as if a roulette ball had come to rest on the equivalent number of a roulette wheel.

The foregoing description and drawings were given for illustrative purposes only, it being understood that the invention is not limited to the embodiments disclosed, but is intended to embrace any and all alternatives, equivalents, modifications and rearrangements of elements falling within the scope of the invention as defined by the following claims.

I CLAIM: